

## Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BANJUL  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 144829

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:SHUM, GA

SUBJECT:HUMAN RIGHTS: COUNTRY ACTION PLAN FOR THE GAMBIA

REF: STATE 139160

1. THE GEOGRAPHIC BUREAUS HAVE BEEN TASKED TO PREPARE HUMAN RIGHTS EVALUATION REPORTS INCLUDING AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT CONDITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN EACH COUNTRY AND THE PROPOSED OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THOSE CONDITIONS.

2. THIS CABLE TRANSMITS THE DESK'S DRAFT REPORT FOR YOUR COMMENTS. YOUR RESPONSE IS REQUESTED BY JUNE 28 SO THAT THE BUREAU CAN MEET THE SUBMISSION DATE OF JULY 1. SLUG CABLE FOR AF DISTRIBUTION ONLY.

3. THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE COUNTRY EVALUATION  
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WILL BE CLASSIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652. REPORTS WILL BE USED AS SOURCE MATERIAL FOR THE PREPARATION OF ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS ON ALL COUNTRIES WHICH ARE RECIPIENTS OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE, AND WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS COORDINATING COMMITTEE, CHAIRED BY THE DEPUTY SECRETARY.

4. A. CONDITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE GAMBIA.

(1) RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON IS WELL ESTABLISHED IN THE GAMBIA. THERE IS TOTAL FREEDOM FROM TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN, OR DEGRADING PUNISHMENT. THERE HAVE BEEN NO INSTANCES OF ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT. FAIR PUBLIC TRIALS ARE ASSURED, AND THE HOME IS INVOLABLE.

(2) THE GAMBIA ENJOYS CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES UNEQUALED NOT ONLY IN AFRICA BUT IN MOST OF THE WORLD AS WELL. THERE IS FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, RELIGION, ASSEMBLY, AS WELL AS MOVEMENT WITHIN THE COUNTRY, FOREIGN TRAVEL, AND EMIGRATION. THERE IS FULL FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS. THE NATION'S APRIL 4-5 ELECTION WAS HOTLY AND OPENLY CONTESTED BY THE FOUR GAMBIAN POLITICAL PARTIES. OPPOSING POLITICAL VIEWS ARE BROADCAST AND PUBLISHED FREELY.

(3) GAMBIAN GOVERNMENT POLICIES ARE FOCUSSED ON FULFILLING THE BASIC NEEDS OF ITS SMALL POPULATION FOR FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH CARE, AND EDUCATION.

A. ALL GOVERNMENT POLICIES ARE TAILORED TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF THE POOR.

B. SUCH CORRUPTION AS EXISTS INVOLVES MINOR SMUGGLING  
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ACROSS THE BORDER FROM SENEGAL, AND PROBABLY BENEFITS THE POOR MORE THAN ANY OTHER GROUP. THERE IS NO WEALTHY ELITE.

(4) IT IS FIRM PUBLIC POLICY TO ASSURE HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THERE HAVE BEEN NO VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY FOR ANY REASON.

(5) ANYONE PROPOSING OUTSIDE INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE GAMBIA WOULD BE MORE THAN WELCOMED TO ATTEMPT TO PROVE SUCH A CHARGE.

5.B. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

THE UNITED STATES CAN BE PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE GAMBIA IN THE FURTHERANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA, AND ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD. A TRUE, FUNCTIONING DEMOCRACY, WITH FOUR POLITICAL PARTIES, NO ARMY, NO POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND FREE PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS, THE GAMBIA STANDS VIRTUALLY ALONE IN AFRICA AND CERTAINLY IN THE TOP RANKS IN THE WORLD, IN THE GENUINE POLITICAL FREEDOM AND PERSONAL RESPECT TO WHICH ITS

CITIZENS ARE ENTITLED, AND ENJOY BY LAW AND BY CUSTOM.  
WE HAVE LITTLE LEVERAGE IN THE GAMBIA, AND TO EXERCISE  
IT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS PURPOSES WOULD BE GREETED WITH IN-  
CREDULITY. THE GOVERNMENT FIRMLY AND VOCIFEROUSLY SUP-  
PORTS THE NEW USG HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES AND WOULD  
COOPERATE TO THE FULLEST POSSIBLE EXTENT IN ANY MEASURES  
WHICH WOULD PROMOTE THEM IN AFRICA OR ELSEWHERE IN THE  
WORLD. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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